

July

Urban District of Ashington



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

AND THE

SENIOR PUBLIC

HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the Year

1959

**ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for 1959**

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Ashington.

Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

I have the honour to present to you, my report, together with that of the Chief Public Health Inspector, for the year 1959.

There is very little alteration in the vital statistics compared with the previous year. The Registrar-General estimates that the population of the Urban District fell by 130 between mid-1958 and mid-1959. There was a slight rise in the birth rate from 15.18 to 15.84 per 1,000 and slight reduction in the death rate, from 13.88 to 13.12 per 1,000, while the corresponding rates for England and Wales were 16.5 births and 11.6 deaths per 1,000 of the population. The infantile mortality rate rose from 24.83 to 26.32 per 1,000 live births but the still-birth rate fell from 24.44 to 17.24 per 1,000 live and still-births.

The total number of deaths fell by 18 but there was an increase of 3 in the number of male deaths and a reduction of 21 in the number of female deaths.

Deaths from malignant neoplasms were 13 fewer than in the previous year but, here again, the reduction was only in female deaths, while the number of men who died from this cause actually increased by 2. Deaths from cancer of the lung in men rose from 7 in 1958 to 13 in 1959 while there was only one female death—a reduction of one compared with 1958.

There was again an increase in the number of notifications of tuberculosis there being 14 new cases—12 respiratory and 2 non-respiratory—compared with 9 respiratory and 1 non-respiratory in the previous year. The increase in respiratory cases was due to a rise of 7 in female notifications while the number of men notified actually decreased by 4. There was 1 death from the respiratory form of the disease. This patient was a man of 74 who had not been notified during his lifetime.

Apart from the epidemic of measles, notifications of infectious disease were small in number.

The steady progress with the improvements being carried out by the National Coal Board in the Colliery houses in the Hirst continues to give cause for satisfaction, particularly, no doubt, to the housewives, who reap the greatest benefits from the improved amenities. A less vital but still important feature of the scheme is the improved appearance of the front streets now provided with paved footpath and of the back streets, following the removal of the old out-buildings.

I have to acknowledge gratefully the ready assistance received from all departments of the Council and thank members of the Council for their continuing interest in the work of the Health Department.

I am,

Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

Your obedient Servant,

C. B. McGREGOR,

M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health,
Urban District of Ashington.

OFFICERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health CATHERINE B. McGREGOR,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officer KATHLEEN DICK, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Public Health
Housing Inspector G. W. TATE, F.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.
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Public Health Inspector (Meat) S. MUSK, M.A.P.H.I.

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SECTION A

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

There has been no alteration in the area or boundaries of the Urban District or in the types of employment available.

The most noteworthy feature of life in Ashington, at present, is the transformation now taking place in the Hirst Ward and the glimpse it gives of future possibilities in the way of tree planting and grass sowing and the introduction of a feeling of space and light into this, hitherto, drab and congested area.

Area in Acres	6.057
Registrar-General's estimate of resident population mid-1959	28,210
Rateable Value	£267,430
One Penny Rate produces	£1,075
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1959)	8,630

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

(The figures in brackets are the corresponding figures for England and Wales.)

Live Births:	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	443	240	203
Illegitimate	13	6	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	456	246	210

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	16.16
(Comparability Factor 0.98) Standard Birth Rate	15.84 (16.50)

Still Births:	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	7	3	4
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8	3	5

Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still) Births	17.24 (20.70)
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DEATHS

Total—287. Male—180. Female—107.

Death Rate per 1,000 of the population	10.17
(Comparability Factor 1.29) Standard Death Rate	13.12 (11.60)
Deaths from Puerperal Causes (Heading 30 of the Registrar-General's short list) Pregnancy, Childbirth and Abortion	1.00 (0.38)
Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births	2.16

Deaths of Infants under 1 year:

All Infants per 1,000 live births	26.32 (22.00)
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	27.09
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.	Male	Female
	5	5

Neonatal Death Rate of Infants (under 4 weeks of age per 1,000 live births)	21.93
Early Neonatal Death Rate (Infants under 1 week)	21.93
Perinatal Mortality Rate (Stillbirths and Deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total Live and Still Births)	40.95

The Registrar-General Supplies the following:

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1959.

	Male	Female
1. Tuberculosis, Respiratory	2	—
2. Tuberculosis (other forms)	—	—
3. Syphilitic Disease	—	1
4. Diphtheria	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	—	—
6. Meningococcal Infections	—	—
7. Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—
8. Measles	—	—
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	—
10. Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	4	2
11. Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	12	1
12. Malignant Neoplasm, breast	—	4
13. Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	—	2
14. Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	19	4
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	—	—
16. Diabetes	—	1
17. Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	28	23
18. Coronary Disease, Angina	27	14
19. Hypertension with Heart Disease	3	3
20. Other Heart Diseases	16	21
21. Other Circulatory Diseases	12	5
22. Influenza	2	1
23. Pneumonia	3	2
24. Bronchitis	15	3
25. Other Diseases of Respiratory System	2	1
26. Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	4	—
27. Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	1	—
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	—
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	3	—
30. Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	—	1
31. Congenital Malformations	2	2
32. Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	15	14
33. Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	—
34. All other Accidents	8	2
35. Suicide	—	—
36. Homicide and Operations of War	—	—

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CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH IN ASHINGTON

CAUSES	Total Number	% of Total Deaths
Diseases of the Heart and Circulation	101	35.19
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	51	17.77
Malignant Neoplasms	48	16.72
	200	69.68

INFANTILE MORTALITY, 1959.

The following table shows the comparative mortality rates during the past 10 years:

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Infantile Deaths under 1 year ...	16	21	24	20	9	7	14	17	15	11	12
Infantile Mortality	30.01	39.10	45.80	41.75	18.59	15.49	29.55	26.09	33.41	24.83	26.32

The following table gives details of the cause of death in the different age groups during the past ten years.

Cause of Death	Under 1 day	1 - 6 days	1 - 2 weeks	2 - 3 weeks	3 - 4 weeks	Total under 1 mth	1 - 3 mths	4 - 6 mths	7 - 9 mths	10 - 12 mths	1 - 12 mths	Total under 1 year
Prematurity	3	2	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	5
Birth Injury	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Congenital Abnormality	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Atelectasis	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Pneumonia.....	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	2
Total	6	4	—	—	—	10	1	—	—	1	—	12

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities.

These are provided by the Public Health Laboratory service at the Newcastle General Hospital and additional facilities are now available at Ashington General Hospital.

The extent to which these facilities have been utilised is shown below.

Speciment sent by	Specimen	Pos.	Neg.
Regional Hospital Board Physician	Sputum for B. Tuberculosis	11	not available
General Practitioner	Faeces for Pathogenic organisms ...	35	11
Medical Officer of Health	Faeces for Pathogenic organisms ...	18	53

Ambulance Service.

This service is provided and maintained by the Northumberland County Council. A 24 hour service is maintained and the provision of radio control has increased the efficiency of the service and reduced the mileage covered by the ambulances.

The Ashington depot serves Ashington, Newbiggin, Lynemouth, Ellington and Linton.

Nursing in the Home.

This service is provided by Northumberland County Council.

Hospitals.

The Regional Hospital Board maintains two hospitals in the area: Ashington General Hospital and North Seaton Hospital. Ashington Hospital now draws patients from a much wider area than it did before July, 1948.

Treatment Centres and Clinics.

The Regional Hospital Board provides a Chest Clinic which is situated in Lintonville Terrace, Ashington.

Maternity and Child Welfare Services.

These are provided by Northumberland County Council at the Centre in South View and some additional services are provided at 40, Bolsover Street, Ashington.

Clinics are held at South View as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Every Monday morning | --Child Welfare Clinic. |
| Alternate Monday afternoons | --Birthday Clinic. |
| Every Tuesday morning | --Child Welfare Clinic. |
| Every Tuesday afternoon | --Birthday Clinic. |
| Every Wednesday morning | --Ante-natal Clinic. |
| Every Wednesday afternoon | --Birthday Clinic. |
| Every Thursday afternoon | --Child Welfare Clinic. |
| Every 4th Friday—all day | --Diphtheria Immunisation Sessions. |

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

General Inspection.

Nuisances in the area are still abated mainly by Informal Action, and only in the case of nine properties had Statutory Notices to be served.

The number of Improvement Grants under the Housing Acts was again quite considerable, totalling 178, of which 129 were for the improvement of houses owned by the National Coal Board.

The house improvements scheme in the Hirst is now beginning to demonstrate the shape of things to come, and when completed, will obviously be of great benefit to the tenants, and a credit to the town and the National Coal Board.

As expected, applications for certificates of disrepair under the Rents Act 1957 have now considerably diminished, after the first flush of applications in response to notices of intention to increase the rent by landlords.

There were only 3 such applications during the year. In 1 case an undertaking was received from the landlord, while in the other 2 cases, certificates of disrepair were granted to the applicants.

The following table summarises the notices served:

Nuisances dealt with and work required to be done.	Verbal or Written Notices	Defects Remedied
Insufficient, choked or defective drainage	32	69
Defective W.C. basins	3	2
Defective W.C. cisterns and service pipes	9	9
Defective water supply and lack of internal water supply	51	119
Defective sinks and waste pipes and provision for internal water supply	50	122
Defective or missing ashbins	—	—
Defective roofs	4	7
Damp walls	13	12
Defective spouts	5	17
Defective wallplaster	5	5
Defective ceilings	3	4
Defective door, windows and floors	13	22
Defective ranges, fireplaces and setpot boilers	10	14
Defective chimney flues	4	6
Defective paving and yard surfaces	2	2
Defective outbuildings	8	25
Defective food stores	3	3
Offensive accumulation	4	4
Other defects	3	7

Water.

The whole of the Water Supply in the area, is by Tynemouth Corporation, and regular sampling showed that it was generally excellent drinking water of the highest purity.

65 samples were taken during the year by the Department, of which 47 were reported to be in Class 1, 8 in Class 2, 6 in Class 3 and 4 in Class 4.

The Class 4 samples were taken at a time when there was a break-down in the chlorination plant, and after this was put right, further samples showed a return to normal.

At the end of the summer, unsatisfactory samples were reported from Bothal Village, and further test samples were taken to trace the source of contamination.

The supply at that time consisted of stream water supplemented by water from Tynemouth Corporation, both being collected in a storage tank. Tests showed that the stream water was polluted, and that there was a fault in the storage tank.

The tank was emptied, and repaired, and use of stream water discontinued.

Further sampling showed the supply to be once again satisfactory.

Progress continued to be made in dealing with just over 400 houses and flats not provided with internal piped water supply, complete with sink.

The serving of informal notices, commenced in August 1957, was continued, notices being served in batches at intervals, to allow available builders and plumbers to cope with the work involved.

By the end of 1959, a total of 408 informal notices and 32 statutory notices had been served, and 386 had been complied with.

Drainage.

229 drainage systems were constructed, reconstructed or repaired during the year, and these were all tested and approved by the Department. The large amount of new drainage work was again due to the installation of internal water supply, and the number of private and colliery house improvements carried out.

Swimming Baths.

The Swimming Baths belong to the Ashington Miners Welfare Institute, but are available to the general public as well as to Institute Members, and are open from April to September each year.

The water used is from the main water supply, and is treated by continuous chlorination, and continuous filtration.

Six bacteriological samples of the baths water were taken during the year, and all but one were reported to be satisfactory. Regular sampling and testing is also undertaken by the Scientific Department of the National Coal Board in Ashington, and copies of the reports are made available to this department. This co-operation is much appreciated.

Schools.

All schools in the district have a main water supply and a water carriage system.

Work is in progress on new schools, and further new schools are contemplated.

Cinemas and Public Buildings.

Routine inspection of all such buildings was carried out during the year.

Atmospheric Pollution.

After the first flush of enthusiasm engendered by the Clean Air Act 1956, complacency appears to have settled in.

Since we are outside what is termed a Black Area, it is not imperative for a report to be submitted to the Minister of Housing and Local Government outlining our programme for making Smoke Control Orders and setting the number of years likely to take to finish the job. This should not, however, deter the Council from a real approach to the problem.

Industrially in Ashington, the Smoke problem is well contained and if the Domestic side could show a like proportionate reduction, it would be a much cleaner town.

The Spoilheaps, while still with us and likely so to remain, do not fire and fume as once they did. They do unfortunately, with certain strong winds, scatter dust and grit around parts of the area. The Stone Washery Plant has undoubtedly benefitted both the town and the Board in considerably reducing the combustible waste. Tree Planting on the Washery Heaps was tried by the transplanting of a trial acre of young trees given jointly by the Council and the Miners Joint Welfare Scheme. A more stringent test of their ability to "strike" could not have been foreseen or conjured up. An unusually dry summer was experienced, but notwithstanding this, more than 80% of the planting survived to confirm the hopes that this was a practical means of binding the heaps, and further planting, through ready co-operation of the Area General Manager and his Senior Officials is assured.

The Welfare Swimming Baths, about which reference was made last year, are now operating with modern equipment, and freedom from nuisance.

Domestically, the position is much the same as it was. When there is little or no wind, a grey smoke pall hangs over the area, and the pollution can be tasted.

The disgusting habit of "accidentally allowing the chimney of the dwelling house to fire" is still all too prevalent, and while the tag "accident" is used to describe this anti-social act, and proof to the contrary would be a difficult process, in far too many instances is it "design."

It is not easily possible to give the total Annual Domestic Coal consumption for the District, but estimations suggest it to be in the region of 60,000 tons. To replace these 60,000 tons of coal with a like amount of Smokeless Fuel of a reactive coke type would require about 100,000 tons of Coal.

The chest complaint sufferers would benefit in no small degree and the housewife would find less work in her daily chores.

Taking the National Average of pollution per ton of coal consumed, 60,000 tons of coal produces more than 150 tons of dust and grit, 1,400 tons of smoke, more than 1,400 tons of sulphur dioxide, which when mixed with water becomes sulphuric acid, and which plays havoc with fabrics, paint work, stone and meal work, to say nothing of what it might do to the human body and organs. These figures can be regarded as a fairly conservative estimate when taken with the total Annual Deposit per square mile recorded in the Deposit Gauge in Hirst Park, for 1959, of 212 tons.

The loss of sunshine, heavier laundry costs, the more frequent renewal of curtains and fabrics, internal and external decorations, the discomfort and distress caused to Bronchial cases, the appalling waste, plus a number of other factors, are all concomitant with Atmospheric Pollution, and should be given very serious consideration.

If this was done in all sincerity, the result must surely call for positive action and I would earnestly hope that this Council will consider the time has now arrived for the implementation of the Clean Air Act 1956.

The table below gives the monthly readings of the Deposit Gauge and the Lead Peroxide Candles, during the year.

Month	Rainfall in inches	Total Deposits Tons/Sq. Mile	Millimetres of SO ₃ per 100 Sq. Centimetres per day		
			Hirst Park	Memorial Park	Woodhorn Village
January	1.63	18.03	2.64	1.39	1.61
February	0.24	8.13	3.67	1.29	1.61
March	0.58	13.57	2.29	1.09	1.09
April	1.26	11.19	0.79	0.84	1.48
May	0.39	12.28	1.02	0.79	0.42
June	1.94	13.99	0.77	0.55	0.60
July	1.74	19.02	0.71	0.41	0.79
August	0.29	16.44	0.53	0.40	0.45
September	0.84	21.85	1.15	0.70	0.87
October	1.05	20.35	2.29	1.04	1.13
November	2.52	29.23	2.39	1.98	1.59
December	2.31	28.07	2.46	1.67	2.11

Rodent Control.

Complaints once again, were comparatively few, and were quickly dealt with. Constant surveys of allotments and open spaces were carried out, resulting in the elimination of infestations at an early stage.

The only infestations to reach major proportions, were at the Council Refuse Tip and on a building site, and both of these were brought under control after treatment.

Careless feeding of birds and poultry in allotments still continues, attracting infestations, and making treatment difficult.

The following table summarises the work done:

	L.A.	TYPE OF PROPERTY				Total
		Dwelling Houses	Agricultural Property	All other (inc. Bus. Premises)		
Total numbers of properties in the district	8	8730	27	976	9731	
No. inspected because of:						
a) Complaint	1	45	9	37	92	
b) as routine surveys	7	20	20	201	248	
No. of Rat infestations:						
a) Major	1	—	—	1	2	
b) Minor	—	36	11	26	73	
No. of Mouse Infestations:						
a) Major	—	—	—	1	1	
b) Minor	—	12	—	14	26	
No. of infested properties treated by Local Authority	1	48	11	42	102	

Burial Grounds.

The question of disposal of the dead remains much the same as for previous years, and there is nothing further to report in this connection.

Pet Animals Act.

One Licence to sell Pet Animals was granted to a stall holder in the closed market.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Year ending 31st December, 1959.

	No. of Inspections during year.	No. of Defects or Contraventions of Byelaws.	No. of Informal Notices served.	Defects remedied by Informal Action.	No. of Statutory Notices served.	Defects remedied by Statutory Action.	Legal Proceedings.
HOUSING							
Structural Defects	303	48	38	46	10	39	—
Defective Food Store	303	3	3	3	—	—	—
Dampness	303	22	13	20	9	16	—
Overcrowding	303	—	—	—	—	—	—
WATER SUPPLY							
Insufficient	376	48	35	96	13	20	—
Unsatisfactory	376	3	3	3	—	—	—
DRAINAGE							
Insufficient	403	35	23	38	8	4	—
Defective	403	52	1	52	—	1	—
SANITARY CONVENiences							
Insufficient	43	—	—	—	—	—	—
Defective	43	13	11	9	2	4	—
GENERAL							
Food Premises	514	73	—	93	—	—	—
Dairies	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slaughterhouses	543	7	—	7	—	—	—
Tents, Vans, etc.	3	1	—	1	—	—	—
Offensive Trades	25	1	—	1	—	—	—
Factories and Workplaces	161	10	—	11	—	—	—
Keeping of Animals	8	4	—	4	—	—	—
Insanitary Ashpits and Bins	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Offensive Accumulations	6	3	—	3	—	—	—
Smoke Nuisances	47	8	—	8	—	—	—
TOTALS	2438	331	127	395	42	84	—

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

There are 118 factories and workshops in the district. The following table gives details of the inspections made and the defects found during the year under review.

There are no outworkers in the district.

The "other" premises included in Section (3) of Table 1 are five building sites on which sanitary accommodation had to be provided.

1. INSPECTIONS

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
i Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by L.A.	38	44	—	—
ii Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	75	78	1	—
iii Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	5	7	—	—
Total	118	129	1	—

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness	3	3	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	1	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	4	4	—	1	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	1	1	—	—	—
Total	9	10	—	1	—

SECTION D

TABULAR STATEMENT OF HOUSING FOR THE YEAR 1959.

Houses completed during the year:

(a) By Local Authority	96
(b) By other bodies or Persons	26

Closing and Demolition.

1. Houses demolished in Clearance Areas	—
2. Houses demolished not in Clearance Areas	—
3. Houses closed, not demolished	14
4. Any other houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in above	3

Repairs.

Houses made fit by procedure under either Housing or Public Health Acts.

1. By informal action	110
2. By owners, following statutory notice	27
3. By Local Authority in default of owners	2
4. Demolition Orders revoked after reconstruction	—

Houses Patched.

1. Houses in Clearance Areas retained for temporary accommodation	—
---	---

Improvement Grants, Housing Act.

	No. of separate houses.
1. Applications submitted to L.A. during year	179
2. Applications rejected	1
3. Applications approved	178
4. Approximate average grant approved per house	£246
5. Total number of applications approved since inception of scheme	488

B. Standard Grants.

1. Number of separate houses for which grants were made during the year	1
2. Number of houses provided with:	
a) Bath or shower	—
b) Wash hand basin	—
c) Hot water supply	—
d) Water closet	1
e) Food store	—

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Ice Cream.

Eight premises in the area are registered for the manufacture of ice cream, though in only five of these was ice cream manufactured during the year.

They have all been inspected regularly, and found to comply with the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations, 1959, and with the Food Hygiene Regulations.

During the year, 31 samples of ice cream were taken and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory. Reports were returned as follows:

Grade 1—24 samples	Grade 3—1 sample
Grade 2— 2 samples	Grade 4—4 samples

Food Shops and Food Preparing Premises.

The number of food premises by type in the area is as follows:

Confectionery	16
Grocers and General Dealers	110
Butchers	26
Greengrocery	16
Bakery	13
Temperance Bars	8
Fish (Wet)	2
Fish and Chips	12
Cafes	2

Three premises are registered as dairies, 70 persons registered as distributors of milk, and 81 licences were issued to milk dealers, including one supplementary licence.

105 premises are registered for the sale and/or manufacture of ice cream, and 30 for the manufacture of sausage, preserved food etc., of which 8 premises are registered for both purposes.

Visits to food premises were made during the year and 73 contraventions of the Food Hygiene Regulations were found. 93 such contraventions were found to be remedied, some of these having been drawn to the notice of the occupiers during the previous year.

Food Hygiene Standards are still quite high, with, generally, only minor contraventions of regulations being found, and these are quickly remedied.

The most frequent offence is still the inadequate protection of unwrapped food on display, and reluctance by some shopkeepers to carry this out has been rather marked.

We are always being told that sales of cakes are considerably lower if they are behind glass, than they would be if they were displayed on the counter unprotected from coughs, sneezes and even handling by customers and children.

It is sincerely hoped that the general public will come to recognise the danger of contamination, and insist on buying only food hygienically displayed.

Foreign Matter in Food.

Foreign matters found in food and reported to us during the year were:

Beetle in Loaf.

Vegetable oil in Loaf.

Flour moth and larvae in Vermicelli.

In the case of the beetle in the loaf, the bakery was prosecuted, resulting in a fine of £10 being imposed.

Complainants in the other two cases did not wish to give evidence in the event of a prosecution, and the firms concerned were cautioned.

Food and Drugs.

Regular samples of food and drugs have been taken in the district by the Northumberland County Council and submitted to the Public Analyst.

Details of these samples have been kindly provided by Mr. C. J. Arridge, Chief County Weights and Measures Inspector, showing that 180 samples of milk and miscellaneous foods were taken during the year.

All samples were reported as satisfactory, with the single exception of a sample of English Cheddar Cheese, contaminated with Penicillium mould.

Meat and Other Food.

The four slaughterhouses in the area were still operating and were granted a renewal of licence for a further twelve months.

Occupiers of the slaughterhouses were made aware of the provisions of the Slaughterhouse (Hygiene) Regulations 1958, and the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Regulations 1958, and informal discussions took place with the occupiers on these Regulations, and on their future plans.

Number of Animals Slaughtered during the Year.

	Bullocks	Heifers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Normal Kill	794	723	—	—	9	1358	3613
Casualties	1	—	—	1	—	1	42
Totals	795	723	—	1	9	1359	3655

Meat and other Organs Condemned, Surrendered and Destroyed.

For Tuberculosis.

Bovine:

Heads and Tongues	34
Lungs	57
Livers	12
Spleens	1
Mesenteries	3
Gut	3
Tripe	3
Beef	1082 lbs.

Swine:

Heads	18
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For other Defined Diseases.

Bovine:

Heads and Tongues	C. Bovis 14; Actinobacillus 4; Abscesses 2; Pleurisy 6; Parasites 4; Abscesses 14.
Lungs	Pentastomes 1.
Livers	Cirrhosis (whole) 57; (part) 497; Abscesses 16; Hydatids 1; Pentastomes 1.
Hearts	C. Bovis 2; Pericarditis 1.
Skirts	Abscesses 1.
Mesenteries	Pentastomes 3.
Gut	John's Disease 1.
Tripe	Abscesses 1.
Beef	Bruising 25 lbs.

Sheep:

Lungs	Pleurisy 2; Pneumonia 7; Abscesses 1; Parasites 1.
Livers	Parasites 12; Abscesses 3.
Hearts	Abscesses 1; Pericarditis 1.
Kidneys	Nephritis 2.
Mutton	Bruising 38 lbs; Abscesses 4 lbs.
Carcases	Emaciation and ill-setting 1; Septic Pleurisy and Peritonitis; Septic Pleurisy and Pneumonia 1.

TOTAL WEIGHT—154 lbs.

Swine:

Lungs	Pneumonia 79; Pleurisy 39.
Livers	Perihepatitis 14; Parasites 38.
Hearts	Pericarditis 36.
Kidneys	Abscesses 1.
Gut	Inflammation 1.
Stomachs	Inflammation 1.
Pork	Bruising 64 lbs; Septic Pleurisy 20 lbs.

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned in whole or in part.

	Cattle excl. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
No. killed and inspected	1519	—	9	3655	1359
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci.					
Whole Carcases condemned	—	—	—	3	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned..	105	—	—	29	130
Percentage affected with disease other than Tuberculosis or Cysticerci	6.9	—	—	0.9	9.6
Tuberculosis Only.					
Whole Carsases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	73	—	—	—	18
Percentage affected with Tuberculosis	4.8	—	—	—	1.3
Cysticercosis.					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	6	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	6	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

Other Foods.

The following foods were found to be unfit and were condemned and destroyed.

Canned Goods	1085 tins	Bacon	181 lbs.
Butter and Cheese	48 lbs.	Sausage	12 lbs
Meat	201 lbs.		

Disposal of unfit food is carried out according to circumstances and its character. Tinned meat, where suitable, is used as rat bait.

Other foods are burned, when suitable arrangements can be made to use some of the large boilers in the district, or buried, or when suitable, used for pig food.

SECTION F

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES .

Hospital accommodation for cases of infectious disease is provided by the Regional Hospital Board at Walkergate Hospital, Newcastle.

**TABLE SHOWING ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
UNDER AGE GROUPS**

Disease	Age unknown	Under 1 year	1—2 years	3—4 years	5—9 years	10—14 years	15—24 years	25—34 years	35—44 years	45—54 years	55—64 years	65—74 years	75 years & over	Total
Dysentery	1	—	2	1	5	2	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	14
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Measles	—	17	116	119	210	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	463
Whooping Cough	—	3	1	2	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
 TOTAL	—	20	119	122	224	3	—	2	1	2	—	1	—	494

Measles.

In common with its adjoining districts, Ashington experienced an epidemic of Measles in 1959. The first notifications were received in January, but it was not until April that the disease became really epidemic. The peak appeared to be reached in May, with 195 notifications and, thereafter, subsided quite rapidly. No case was notified after 13th August and there were no deaths.

Dysentery.

The cases of Dysentery (Sonne) were somewhat scattered throughout the year and the number of notifications does not indicate an epidemic but, undoubtedly many more cases occurred than were notified.

Diphtheria.

No case of this disease has been seen in Ashington in the past 10 years and there has been no fatal case in the past 13 years.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

During the year, 326 pre-school and 103 school children completed a primary course of treatment while 151 pre-school and 317 school children received re-inforcing injections.

At 31st December, 1959, it was estimated that the immunity indices for the different age groups were as follows:

Children under 1 year	17.58%
Children aged 1-4 years	84.39%
Children aged 5-14 years	56.89%
All children under 15 years	60.82%

Towards the end of the year, as the Poliomyelitis vaccination slackened off, it was possible, with the help of the Assistant School Medical Officer, to resume immunisation in the schools and this is reflected in the slightly improved index for schoolchildren. It is still, however, far from satisfactory, and it is hoped that 1960 will show a further and more substantial rise.

Poliomyelitis Vaccination.

In the autumn of 1958, the upper age limit for vaccination was raised to 25 years but the young people showed little interest in it until the spring of 1959, when the death of a well known footballer, from Poliomyelitis resulted in a rush for vaccination. For a time, the demand was almost over-whelming and, in an effort to meet it, open sessions, without appointments were held in the Child Welfare Centre at Ashington and visits were made to carry out vaccination at all factories, while the Medical Officer of the National Coal Board vaccinated large numbers at the collieries. The vast majority of those who registered for vaccination completed the primary course of two injections and also returned for the third injection after 7 months.

Separate figures are not available for the Ashington District but those for the whole of the Central Area of the County may be of interest.

During 1959, the primary course was completed by 7,918 persons and a third injection was given to 9,386.

At 31st December 1959, it was estimated that, since the commencement of the campaign, 14,111 children and 5,293 persons in other groups had received two injections and 12,793 persons in all eligible groups had received a third injection.

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1959.

Age Groups	NEW CASES						DEATHS					
	Resp.			Non-Resp.			Resp.			Non-Resp.		
	M	F	M	F	Total	M	F	M	F	Total	M	F
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 - 4 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 - 14 years	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 - 24 years	1	2	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 - 34 years	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35 - 44 years	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 - 54 years	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55 - 64 years	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 - 74 years	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
75 years and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	4	8	1	1	14	1	—	—	—	—	—	1

During 1959 14 new cases of Tuberculosis were notified, 12 respiratory and 2 non-respiratory. This is an increase of 3 in the number of cases of respiratory disease and an increase of 1 in the number of non-respiratory cases.

There was one death from respiratory tuberculosis. This patient was a man of 74 years whose disease was not notified prior to his death.

The death rate from respiratory tuberculosis was 0.0354 per 1,000 of the population.

The corresponding rate for England and Wales was 0.077.

MALIGNANT NEOPLASMS

Site	MALES					Total	FEMALES					Total
	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+			35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	
Brain	—	1	—	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jaw	—	1	—	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pharynx	—	1	—	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lung	1	9	3	—		13	—	—	—	1	1	2
Breast	—	—	—	—		—	2	1	1	—	4	4
Stomach	—	—	1	3		4	—	—	2	—	—	2
Pancreas	—	—	1	—		1	—	1	—	—	—	1
Colon	—	—	1	1		2	1	—	—	1	—	2
Rectum	—	1	—	—		1	—	1	—	—	—	1
Prostate	—	2	1	2		5	—	—	—	—	—	—
Uterus	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Cervix	—	—	—	—		—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Bladder	—	1	—	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pelvis	—	—	1	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haematopoietic System	—	2	—	—		2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Melanoma	—	—	1	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unknown	—	1	—	—		1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	19	9	6	35		1	2	4	4	2	13

Malignant Neoplasms.

The total number of deaths from Malignant Neoplasms fell from 61 in 1958 to 48 in 1959 but there was actually an increase of 2 in the number of male deaths while the number of female deaths declined by 15, to less than half the previous year's figure. There were 13 male deaths from cancer of the lung, an increase of 6 and there was 1 female death.

This gives Ashington a death rate for lung cancer very slightly higher than the national rate although the total death rate from cancer was less in Ashington than in the country as a whole.

Malignant Neoplasms of the Lung and Bronchus.

Death Rate in Ashington	0.496 per 1,000.
Death Rate in England and Wales	0.464 per 1,000.

Malignant Neoplasms of All other Sites.

Death Rate in Ashington	1.205 per 1,000.
Death Rate in England and Wales	1.676 per 1,000.

Malignant Neoplasms of All Sites.

Total Death Rate in Ashington	1.701 per 1,000.
Total Death Rate in England and Wales	2.140 per 1,000.

